Puerto Rico and 8 States Lose HIV Surveillance Funding

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Puerto Rico and eight states in the continental United States will no longer receive federal funding for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) new HIV monitoring system, which found that that annual U.S. infection rate was 40 percent higher than previously estimated, *The New York Times* reports. The CDC is shifting the number of participating states from 34 to 25 based on a competitive application process.

According to the article, the states that lost funding were Georgia, Illinois, Maryland, Missouri, Ohio, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania and Tennessee.

Terry Butler, a spokeswoman for the National Center for HIV, STD and TB Prevention at the CDC, told the *Times* that the total funding for HIV surveillance would remain the same nationwide, but the remaining 25 states and cities would receive more of it because they had the most reliable systems in place that would produce the best possible infection rate estimates.

According to Julie Scofield, executive director of the National Alliance of State and Territorial AIDS Directors, the nine jurisdictions cut from the program lost roughly $3 million in funding combined. Scofield added that overall money available for tracking HIV infections and trends is decreasing, making it difficult for many states to keep up.

"Surveillance funding is starving at the CDC," Scofield said. "Their ability to say that they're going to have ongoing reliable reports of incidence is somewhat questionable unless [they] have funding."

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